



CPNI Advice Note:

Protecting pedestrian queues from Vehicle As a Weapon Attack

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The risk to pedestrians from Vehicle As a Weapon (VAW) attack remains a realistic possibility during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social distancing measures will require businesses to manage customers flows and numbers going into premises. As such it is likely that customers will form or be asked to form orderly queues to enter premises.



[Vehicle-borne threats](#) range from vandalism to sophisticated or aggressive attack by determined criminals or terrorists.

Vehicles (such as cars, vans and lorries) are widely available, easy to acquire and use. Vehicles may be purchased, rented, stolen or hijacked by terrorists. Consequently, driving a vehicle into crowds of people has been and remains an attack method used by terrorists.

During a VAW attack, the terrorist is unlikely to comply with the rules of the road. Terrorists may park illegally just before the attack then speed, ignore traffic signals, drive

on the wrong side of the road, mount footways and enter pedestrianised zones.

However, as the intent is to harm as many people as possible during a VAW attack, they are less likely to drive in a manner that risks ending the attack prematurely: rendering the vehicle unusable or seriously injuring themselves. Consequently, the terrorist may tend to avoid obstacles, including relatively insubstantial ones.

In general, VAW attacks have been the first part of a layered attack. The attacks frequently begin on public roads with little or no warning and are often followed by a wider firearms or bladed weapon attack.

The end of a VAW attack may look similar to a road traffic incident: the vehicle losing control and crashing into barriers, buildings, street furniture or other vehicles. Individuals may approach the vehicle to help the occupants, inadvertently becoming targets for a follow-on bladed weapon or firearms attacks.



In order to minimise the risk to queues of people, organisations can take practical and achievable measures to either deter or disrupt a Vehicle As a Weapon Attack. The range of options highlighted below provide varying levels of protection and residual risk.

Further advice can be sought from local [Police Counter Terrorism Security Advisers](#) (CTSAs).

- In producing online and local messaging, including signage be mindful of how detailed information can be very useful to those with hostile intent – giving credible, detailed information that could identify an attractive target about queue locations, times and number of people or even security arrangements.



Vigilant security behaviour will show any hostile individual watching that it's not just security guards and CCTV they need to worry about. Alert employees are just as likely to spot suspicious activity and report it.

- Raise awareness of the full range of security risks to the public through staff briefings (which could include the [ACT e-learning package](#)).
- In the first instance queues should be positioned behind existing rated vehicle security barriers.
- Consider and minimise the risks when queues are created outside normally protected areas:

- **Queues**

- Work with near neighbouring premises to develop a plan for queues.
- Queues should not be positioned near live traffic i.e. roads. If they have to be, position away from the kerb edge.
- Move queues to areas where vehicles don't normally access.
- Avoid creating long queues. Consider a secondary marshalling area if required.
- Marshalling can help enforce queue structure, length, social distancing and provide additional vigilance and response to an incident.
- Place "Do not join the queue" signs when its length or position increases the risk to people.
- Where possible, orientate the queues so people can see hazards or dangers approaching.
- Fast dispersal / escape routes for pedestrians should be considered when setting out your queue.
- Where possible and whilst factoring in the need for social distancing and not impeding pedestrian flow on the footway:
 - Orientate queues so they are at right angles to potential vehicle attack routes.
 - Avoid orienting queues in the same direction as potential vehicle attack routes.
 - Positioning queues near or in between street furniture can provide some protection.



- **Traffic management**

- Reducing vehicles in the areas of queues will make it safer for pedestrians.
- Close off vehicle access to shared spaces when queues are present.
- In car parks, create a pedestrian safety zone by preventing or limiting vehicle parking next to queues of people. Consider enforcing 'no parking' as far away from the queues as possible with cones, temporary pedestrian rails or more robust barriers.
- If not possible then introduce reduced speed limit and temporary traffic calming measures.



- **Barriers**

- In the first instance queues should be positioned behind existing rated vehicle security barriers ([IWA14-1](#) & [PAS68](#)).
- The presence of street furniture (e.g. bus stops, signage posts, seating, telephone boxes, including trees) should be viewed as an opportunity to offer some protection.
- Street furniture should not be removed but could be re-located to enhance queue protection.
- Footway widening into the carriageway:
 - If implemented then it should incorporate temporary rated vehicle security barriers (IWA 14-1, PAS 68, [CPNI VADS](#) or [road safety barriers](#)) to ensure people in the vicinity are afforded some protection.
 - Where the above measures cannot be deployed, barriers that are clearly visible and provide a demarcation will be essential.
 - Under Section 115E of the Highways Act 1980, Traffic Authorities should also be asked if the hard measures require licensing. If deployed on the public carriageway, traffic signage should conform to the Department for Transport's The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 20167. Adequate lighting should illuminate the deployment location so that pedestrians and drivers can see the barriers and signage.
- Where long or multiple queues form, consider deploying vehicle barriers (refer above) along the footway to disrupt a vehicle being able to drive down its length.
- Do NOT remove any security features / useful street furniture items without considering protective security in the round.



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